

PRATT & WHITNEY PLANT
Four Unfinished Test Cells
(Pratt & Whitney Plant, Building No. 46)
1500-2000 East Bannister Road
Kansas City
Jackson County
Missouri

HAER No. MO-118-M

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD
Midwest Regional Office
National Park Service
601 Riverfront Drive
Omaha, Nebraska 68102

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD

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Location: 1500–2000 East Bannister Road, Kansas City, Jackson County, Missouri

Present Owner: U. S. Department of Energy, National Nuclear Security Administration.

Present Use: The NNSA uses the Four Unfinished Test Cells for miscellaneous storage.

Significance: These four test cells were designed by Albert Kahn's firm to accommodate an increase in aircraft engine production but were never finished. From the initial years of Pratt & Whitney with its Double Wasp engines, through the years of Westinghouse, responsible for manufacturing the J34 Gas Turbine engine, to the development of thermonuclear weapon components during the Cold War, the Kansas City Plant housed a multidisciplinary engineering and manufacturing facility tied to the nation's homeland security. Due to the diversified requirements of subsequent corporations, the original Pratt & Whitney Plant was modified and added to, meeting the needs of ongoing technological advances while retaining the structural elements that made this complex a landmark of American industrial design.

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Date: April 9, 2012

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History

1. Date of Construction: 1945
2. Architect/Engineer: Albert Kahn Associated Architects and Engineers.
3. Builder/Contractor/Supplier: Long-Turner Construction Company, Kansas City
4. Original Plans: Yes
5. Alterations and Additions: No

B. Historical Context

This series of four Test Cells were under construction prior to the end of World War II in order to accommodate an earlier anticipation for an increase in the production of aircraft engines. However, the war ended before the cells were completed and have since been used for storage. They were designed by Albert Kahn Associated Architects and Engineers after the death of Albert Kahn.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement

The building is adjacent to the test cell area of the Main Manufacturing Plant and occupies 5,509 gross square feet. The approximate dimension of the structure is 50' x 110'.

1. Architectural Character: Modern Industrial
2. Condition of Fabric: Good

B. Description of Exterior

The main facades of each of the Four Unfinished Test Cells face east. Constructed of reinforced concrete, there are single entrances at the far-east end of each south façade. The flat roofs are sloped to the east.

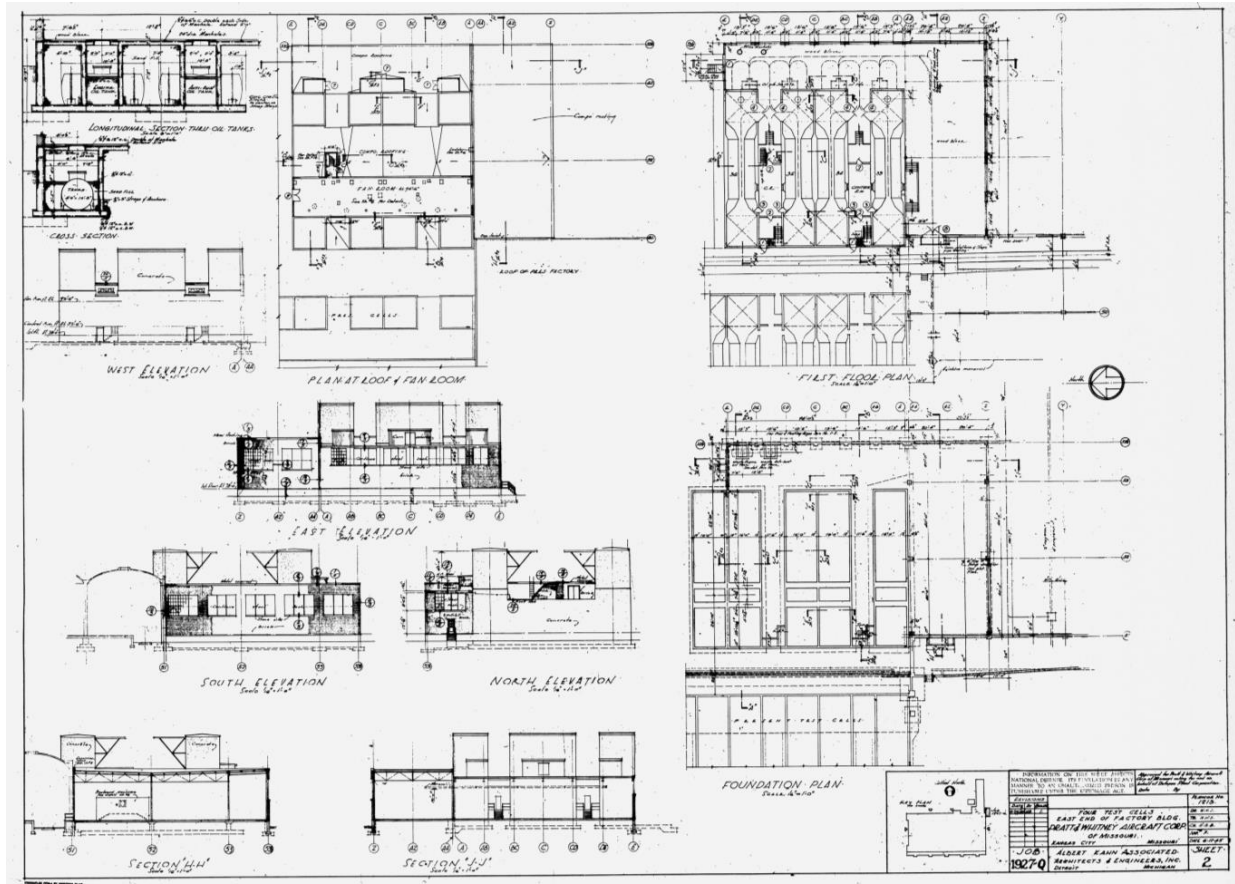
C. Description of Interior

Due to restricted access, it was not possible to examine the interior of the buildings.

D. Site

The Four Unfinished Test Cells are adjacent to the Test Cells (Building No. 87) at the east façade. There is a gap between the two structures where a rail line was located. The gap still exists today.

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Four Test Cells (unfinished)
 East end of Factory Building
 Pratt & Whitney Corporation of Missouri

Albert Kahn Associated Architects & Engineers, Inc.
 Sheet 2
 Job 1927-Q
 Date: June 11, 1945

Source: Archives, National Nuclear Security Administration, Kansas City, Missouri

PART III. BIBLIOGRAPHY

Primary Sources

Kahn, Albert. Archives, Albert Kahn and Associates, Detroit, Michigan.

Kahn, Albert and Associates. "Factory Construction." *Architectural Forum* October 1942.

Kahn, Albert Associated Architects & Engineers, Inc. Aircraft Engine Plant for United Air Corporation of Missouri. Plans. Various dates. Job No. 1927. Archives at Albert Kahn Associates, Detroit, Michigan.

_____. Four Test Cells (Unfinished). Job No. 1927-Q, Sheet 2, June 11, 1945. Archives, National Nuclear Security Administration, Kansas City, Missouri.